

The Third Sunday of Easter

Lectionary # 46

Reading I: Acts 2: 14, 22 - 33

Saint Peter wishes for those in Jerusalem to **listen** and hear. This is evidenced by the fact that there is great emphasis placed on the fact that he *raised his voice*. He is heralding the Resurrection of Jesus and the salvation of the world! This certainly is the message that the proclaimer would want to be heard. Saint Peter states emphatically to all within earshot..*listen to my words*. In this passage it may seem as if there is an indictment by Saint Peter on the listeners regarding the death of Jesus, but rather he wishes them to know that Jesus has overcome death. Saint Peter invites those **listening** to believe and witness to this Jesus, as the Anointed One of God, who has passed from death to everlasting life.

Reading 2: 1 Peter 1: 17-21

This letter was written during a time of persecution of Christians, both in Jerusalem and in Rome. The admonition is not limited to that time, but is sound advice for all who live the Christian life. Indeed we will often be *strangers in a strange land*. With parental warmth and care, Saint Peter reminds us to **listen** and hear that we were *ransomed from the futile conduct of our ancestors*. In this, Saint Peter is referring to sin and that we are free and must remain free. We were purchased by something more valuable than paltry gold or silver; we were purchased by the blood of the spotless lamb, Jesus Christ. This message is crucial for all people, at all times, and all places to provide hope.

Gospel: Luke 24: 13 - 35

Here we encounter the despondent moods of two disciples who are traveling to Emmaus. It is only in their **listening** to Jesus, disguised as a stranger, who they meet along the way that they begin to have their spirits lifted. They share their dashed hopes and then Jesus, beginning with Moses, shares with them all that has to do with the Messiah. It is only when they sit to eat and see Jesus in the breaking of the bread that they come to the realization that their hopes have been fulfilled. It was because of their attentive **listening** that they truly heard and realized that their *hearts were on fire as he talked with them along the way*. We are also called to a deep **listening** that moves from merely hearing with our ears to listening with our entire being.



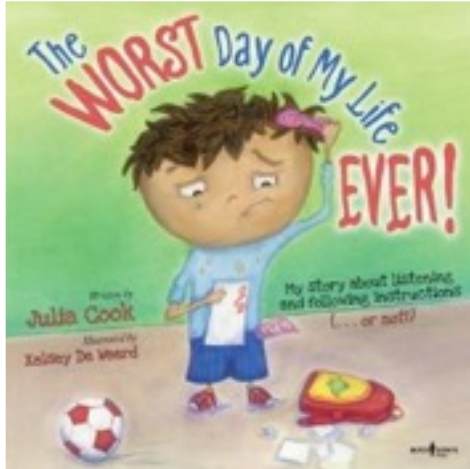
easter



lectionary
reading



children's
story



The WORST Day of My Life EVER!

Written by Julia Cook

Illustrated by Kelsey De Weed

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character
education
activity

Active listening goes beyond hearing words. It involves entering into all that is being communicated by facial expression, tone of voice, and body language.

The Worst Day of My Life Ever!

Throughout the harrowing days of RJ, the chief character in the story of *The Worst Day of My Life Ever!* we encounter mishaps that continuously occur for a young man who consistently will not **listen**. It is almost as if the idea of **listening** is completely off his radar. All of a sudden RJ finds that in **listening**, his worst day ever starts to be transformed into his best day ever. The author presents, in a light-hearted manner, the important life skill of **listening** to others, following directions and making good choices. The focus of the book is distinctly on helping and assisting children learn how to **listen** to be successful in school. However, the same methods can be applied to **spiritual listening**, listening that goes well beyond mere hearing, something that can penetrate the heart and soul as a young person begins their faith journey.

Emphasizing the importance of being attentive to what is being said and being able to convey a statement as clearly and accurately as possible is the intent of the Activity presented below.

Activity

Step One: Prepare several note cards with different phrases or messages written on them. Make them simple but wordy enough to make it a challenge to repeat the phrase or message from one person to another.

Step Two: Divide the class into three or four groups and place each of the groups of students in a line. Show the first person in the line the phrase or message on the note card. The first person is then to whisper the phrase or message only once to the person next in line.

The phrase or message continues on down the line until it reaches the last person. Once the last person has heard the phrase, they are to speak it aloud.

Step Three: Help the students understand that **listening** is a skill that must be attended to and there are often things that get in the way of clear listening. Continue so that the students can have a number of experiences to improve this skill. ²



case study

Look.
Feel.
Know.
Act.

What could you do today?

Commit yourself to better listening. Look at the Chinese Character, for “to listen” provided and see that listening involves not only the ears but also the eyes, the heart, and an undivided attention. The next time someone wishes to speak with you about something very important make sure that you invite the person to a quiet space without any distractions so that you can **listen** attentively. Try to use all of your senses to hear what is being said, not only in words, but the tone of voice, the facial expressions and the person’s body language.

In addition you may wish to have your mom or dad read you one of the readings from the Bible in a quiet place and see how the reading may have more meaning when you are listening with your entire being. What did you hear? What was the message?

Look Feel Know Act

Notice that in God’s design of the human body, we are given two ears and one mouth. This in itself indicates clearly that we are to be more about listening than talking. Given this truth, spend time with God and others intentionally **listening** with undivided attention and see what occurs. Often there is so much noise in our lives that it becomes a barrier to true **listening**. Praying to God includes not only speaking our praise, thanks, need for forgiveness and petitions to God but also requires us to **listen** to God’s voice. To listen to God we must have quiet within and outside of our selves. Likewise, when we wish to hear and **listen** to something important, it would be a good practice to find a quiet environment for that **listening** to occur.

RJ, in *The Worst Day of My Life Ever*, finds that by **listening**, truly **listening**, his worst day ever is transformed into his best day ever. **Listening** to God's voice can do the very same thing for each of us. Not only can **listening** to God's voice change a day in our lives, it can transform all of life for us. Being attentive to God's voice can bring about wondrous things if we will simply open our ears, our eyes and our hearts. An undivided heart and undivided attention can bring about the dream that God has for all of us. The dream that God has for us is this: to be a loving community established in peace and dedicated to each person becoming fully alive.

Pray in such a way that your communication with God will involve more listening to the voice of God than of talking to God. Amen.



**closing
tool**



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